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WHY 4-H CLUB WORK IS EFFECTIVE

A radio talk by Gertrude L. Warren, Extension Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, delivered Saturday, September 3, 1932, in the national 4-H club radio program, broadcast by a network of 59 associate NBC radio stations.

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It is a pleasure to chat again with the 4-H club people of America. After hearing splendid reports of individual achievement in 4-H club work, as we have today, I always see before me in fast moving pictures, as on a screen, community groups of you club members saying in unison your 4-H club pledge. For it seems to me that many of the results of your own individual achievements have come largely from your faithful adherence to this pledge of yours---this pledge which may be heard, perhaps, during a rally day on an historic village green of New England; or in the midst of a club tour to a fine garden or cotton field of the South; or at club week on a college campus out where the tall corn grows.

As you perhaps already know, the enrollment and completions of all 4-H club members for 1931 set a new record. There was an outstanding increase in the enrollment of you young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one. This certainly shows that 4-H club work is effective. No one of you would remain in the work, on a distinctly voluntary basis as it is, were it not meeting your own needs. Your increasing interest proves that the work gives you useful knowledge and helps to develop your best selves through homemaking and agricultural activities, cooperative enterprises, good times together, and through the services rendered to others in your homes and communities.

This summer I asked 4-H club members whom I met why 4-H club work is effective from their own standpoint. I wish that you might have heard all their answers, but here are a few typical ones:

A homemaking club girl said, in part:

"Through my ten years of 4-H club work, I have been able to help with all phases of the housework, to see beauty in everyday tasks as well as in the great out-doors, and to earn enough money for my first year at the State University."

Now a word from a dairy club boy:

"We dairy club boys owe much of our progress to our local club leader who has a dairy herd of his own of 35 head. Twelve years ago he started in club work with just one calf."

Listen to a bee club member:

"After three years of 4-H bee club work, our honey production is now 77 pounds per hive as compared to our Pennsylvania State average of 36 pounds."

Another Pennsylvania club member said:

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"Because of the results of my five years in the 4-H potato club work, father has now given me, on a partnership basis, complete charge of spraying our 65 acres of potatoes."

I recall very well the fine young man who said:

"4-H club work has helped me to manage our farm and keep the family together after losing dad."

A club girl stated with pride:

"In every one of our club members' homes, there is a plentiful year's supply of fruits and vegetables due to our garden and canning club work - a part of our county 'Live-at-Home' program."

And communities benefit too! One club member said:

"4-H club work helps us to organize quickly. At our county camp when a fire broke out on a neighboring farm, we club boys started a bucket brigade and are credited with saving the entire farm home."

I remember also the farmer who told me how the demonstrations of a single lamb club had improved the sheep-management practices of their whole county.

Many young people stated that 4-H club work had shown them how to be of real service. In New Hampshire a state group known as "Service Seekers" each year takes charge of the recreational activities during club week at the college. The Farmers' Institute of Ashtabula County, Ohio, this year was entirely officered by 4-H club members. Four-H clubs throughout Oregon organized fire hazards campaigns to prevent farm fire losses. I think that one of the most appreciated services was rendered by a girls' club that is taking care of children on Saturdays while the mothers do their shopping. On one Saturday alone, these club girls cared for 27 little children.

Yes, these are panoramic glimpses of part of the answers to the question, "Why 4-H club work is effective." Now comes the question, "How to make 4-H club work in our own communities even more effective during the coming year?" My best wishes are that, whatever your program, each of you may make a happy 4-H record of continuous growth as have these, whose stories you have just heard.